

**Farewell Address
Springfield, Illinois
February 11, 1861**

When Abraham Lincoln left Springfield, Illinois, to start his inaugural journey for Washington, D.C., he paid an unforgettable tribute to his friends and neighbors in what is known today as the Farewell Address. Lincoln spoke these famous, emotion-charged words as he boarded a special presidential train at the Great Western Railroad station, now a restored Lincoln visitor site.

The day Lincoln saw this depot for the last time he recognized most of the people in the huge crowd gathered outside. Ahead of him was war, death, and enduring fame; behind him were the warm-hearted people who provoked this response:

My friends, no one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when, or whether ever, I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of the Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell.

Source: Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln, edited by Roy P. Basler.
<http://showcase.netins.net/web/creative/lincoln/speeches/farewell.htm>